

May 1, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CORRECTED

PSC SETS FOUR TOWN HALL MEETINGS ON AQUILA RATE PROPOSAL

LINCOLN – Four town hall meetings have been scheduled by the Nebraska Public Service Commission to provide a forum for the public on a proposed rate increase by Aquila, one of three privately owned utilities providing natural gas service in the state.

Aquila operates natural gas franchises in 108 Nebraska communities and filed for a 9.6 percent overall rate increase, or \$16.3 million, on November 15. State law permits Aquila to begin collecting its proposed rates on an interim basis subject to refund 90 days after the filing, pending a final determination of the proposal by the Commission.

Aquila's service territory in eastern Nebraska includes communities in three of the Commission's five districts represented by Frank Landis of Lincoln, Tim Schram of Gretna, and Rod Johnson of Sutton. The town hall meetings and locations:

May 16

10 a.m. -- Madison County Board Room, 1313 North Main Street, Madison.

2 p.m. – York County Commissioner's Room, Lower Level, 510 Lincoln Avenue, York.

May 17

9 a.m. – City Council Chambers of Blair City Hall, 218 South 16th Street, Blair.

Noon – City Council Chambers of Papillion City Hall, 122 East Third Street, Papillion.

In addition, a public hearing will be conducted at the Commission's Hearing Room on the Third Floor of The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Lincoln, beginning at 10 a.m. on May 30.

Commissioner Landis will preside at the hearing officer.

Commissioner Johnson said the town hall meetings will give the public an opportunity to ask questions as well as comment on the proposed rates to the Commission. The Commission also expects Aquila to participate in the meetings.

"We want the meetings to offer the public an opportunity to state their thoughts and get information on the proposal," Johnson said.

Commissioner Schram said the state agency has three options. "We can reject the proposal entirely, grant the company part of its request, or approve it in its entirety."

The Commission is responsible for weighing the interests of the public and the utility in determining reasonable rates for natural gas service. In doing so, the Commission uses its own qualified experts to review the proposal.

Aquila will be represented by its counsel and consultants. In addition, the state provides a public advocate, Roger Cox of Lincoln, to represent the interests of ratepayers.

Aquila groups the communities it serves in Rate Areas 1, 2, and 3. Communities served by Aquila are:

Rate Area 1 – Bellevue, Blair, Elkhorn, Gretna, La Vista, Papillion, Plattsmouth, Ralston, Valley, and Waterloo.

Rate Area 2 – Cheney, Lincoln, and Walton.

Rate Area 3 – Adams, Arlington, Ashland, Auburn, Aurora, Avoca, Bancroft, Battle Creek, Beatrice, Bee, Beemer, Bennet, Blue Springs, Bradshaw, Clatonia, Columbus, Cortland, Craig, Crete, David City, DeWitt, Dorchester, Eagle, Elmwood, Emerson, Endicott, Exeter, Fairbury, Fairmont, Firth, Friend, Garrison, Geneva, Grafton, Greenwood, Hallam, Hampton, Hickman, Holland, Homer, Hooper, Humboldt, Humphrey, Jackson, Johnson, Lindsay, Louisville, Madison, Manley, Mead, Meadow Grove, Milford, Murdock, Murray, Mynard, Newman Grove, Nickerson, Norfolk, North Bend, Oakland, Odell, Osceola, Palmyra, Panama, Pawnee City, Peru, Pierce, Pilger, Plymouth, Rising City, Rosalie, Schuyler, Scribner, Seward, Shelby, Stanton, Staplehurst, Sterling, Table Rock, Tecumseh, Tekamah, Thurston, Tilden, Uehling, Ulysses, Wakefield, Walthill, Waverly, Wayne, Weeping Water, West Point, Wilber, Winnebago, Wymore, and Yutan.

###